

Books

FOUR TAKES

On the rights of women

We still have a long way to go

BY M.J. ANDERSEN
GLOBE CORRESPONDENT

Earlier this month, the 25th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration on Women passed with little notice. Produced by the United Nations' Fourth World Conference on Women, the document marked what elated advocates saw as a turning point in the struggle for equal rights.

In a historic address, then-first lady Hillary Rodham Clinton called on all nations to acknowledge that women's rights are inseparable from human rights. Writing in the October issue of *The Atlantic*, Clinton notes that in the years since, women have realized gains across the globe. Yet a UN Population Fund report warns that the COVID-19 pandemic could prove "catastrophic" for women, with setbacks that include increased caregiving burdens, diminished access to contraceptives, and more intimate-partner violence.

Over the summer, Americans also marked the 100th anniversary of the 19th Amendment, which afforded women the right to vote (in theory, that is; in practice, it wasn't until the 1965 Voting Rights Act that most Black women and men secured that right). Many now argue that the vote alone is not enough. To ensure that their voices are truly heard, more women must hold office.

In "The Right to Be Elected: 100 Years Since Women's Suffrage," the Boston Review Forum has called on several scholars to weigh this elusive goal. In her informative lead essay, Jennifer M. Piscopo notes that more than 70 nations have adopted quotas. Some require political parties to run certain percentages of women for office, others to reserve a certain number of legislative positions for them. (The push has been notably strong in Latin America, with Argentina leading the way.)

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LUCILA PERINI FOR THE BOSTON GLOBE

BIBLIOPHILES

On race and conversation

BY AMY SUTHERLAND | GLOBE CORRESPONDENT

Given the mass demonstrations over police violence against Black people plus a president bent on widening the country's deep racial divide, Claudia Rankine's new book, "Just Us: An American Conversation," could not be timelier. But Rankine writes about what white Americans should have been doing for decades: talking about race. Using a mix of poetry, anecdotes, tweets, documents, and images, Rankine shows us how to start the conversation. With works such as "Citizen: An American Lyric," Rankine has won multiple awards for her prose and poetry, including a MacArthur "genius" grant. She teaches poetry at Yale University. Rankine will discuss her book during a virtual talk presented by Harvard Book Store at 7 p.m. Tuesday.

BOOKS: What have you been reading?

RANKINE: A book by W.J.T. Mitchell called "What Do Pictures Want?" because I'm interested in how you portray violence without repeating the trauma of violence. We have so many videos coming out of the police shooting Black people. I've read Mitchell's "Picture Theory" earlier and turned to this book to think about the way images function in our imagination and as political tools. I often go to books to help me work through some ques-

tions.

BOOKS: Have you found you can answer your questions with fiction and poetry?

RANKINE: There are poets like Jericho Brown, who wrote "The Tradition," and Fred Moten, who moves between the lyrical and the critical, that offer me help. Saidiya Hartman, who wrote "Wayward Lives, Beautiful Experiments," is an incredible theorist and a

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'I often go to books to help me work through some questions.'

Belonging here

On what it means to be a full citizen

By Walton Muyumba
GLOBE CORRESPONDENT

CONDITIONAL CITIZENS: On Belonging in America
By Laila Lalami
Pantheon, 208 pages, \$25.95

Laila Lalami's new book, "Conditional Citizens: On Belonging in America," is an argument for active, equal United States citizenship. In order to forward her conception of equality, Lalami must first present its counter construct: conditional membership in the body politic. Drawing on her considerable talents and abundant intelligence — she's been a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize ("The Moor's Account," 2014), the National Book Award ("The Other Americans," 2019), and the NBCC Nona Balakian Citation for Excellence in Reviewing — Lalami attempts to account for the ways that powerful American forces use class status, religion, border policing, national origin, non-whiteness, and gender to diminish and deactivate full citizenship.

Framing her treatise as "a story about love and country," Lalami examines the fictions, histories, policies, and political practices that marginalize so many Americans in secondary or

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One copy to mark up and one to keep clean

► **BIBLIOPHILES**
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beautiful writer.

BOOKS: Have recent events inspired other reading?

RANKINE: I was fascinated by the video of the woman who called the police on the Black bird-watcher in Central Park, by how white women can weaponize white fragility in service of Black death. So I went back to Ruth Frankenberg's "White Women, Race Matters." I've also recently read "White Rage" by Carol Anderson, "Reproductive Injustice" by Dana-Ain Davis and "Counter-narratives" by John Keene. I recommend those books and Susan Briante's "Defacing the Monument," which uses documents, newspaper articles, quotes, and typographical images in a very exciting way. I'm always interested in hybrid works.

BOOKS: Which books about whiteness do you recommend most often?

RANKINE: "White Fragility" by Robin DiAngelo. I love that book because it offers a vocabulary for naming these dynamics that we recognize. Judith Butler's work isn't specifically about whiteness, but it's about precarity and citizenship, especially her last one, "The Force of Non-Violence."

BOOKS: Did you grow up in a house of books?

RANKINE: We had lots of books, and I was a big library attendee. I used to go there and take out all the books by an author. That's why at a young age I had read everything by Beverly Cleary.

BOOKS: Do you still read everything an author wrote, one after the other?

RANKINE: Once I'm interested in

someone's work, I'm really interested. Like the artist Glenn Ligon. I first saw his neon work. Then I read every review and article about his work, and any book he put out.

BOOKS: What are your other reading habits?

RANKINE: If I'm really interested in a book I usually get two copies. I have one I mark and the one I keep clean. Those are in my living room. There are clean copies of Hilton Als's "White Girls," Cathy Park Hong's "Minor Feelings," and Gary Younge's "Another Day In the Death of America." These books have partners in my office that are written in and dog-eared. Somebody whose work I'm inking a lot now is Teju Cole; his "Blind Spot," which combines short prose pieces with images.

BOOKS: Has the pandemic influenced any of your reading habits?

RANKINE: It has allowed me to do what I'm usually fighting to do. When I was younger what I loved was being shut in because I couldn't afford the theater, but I could afford to make a cup of tea, sit in a chair, and read a book. Then I would take it everywhere. It became what I read at lunch, what kept me up at night. As I've gotten older it's been harder to find the time to sink into those kinds of reads. Now that I've stopped traveling and people can't come over, I have found myself reading, not for work or to answer questions, but just because someone said, "It's a treat; you should read it."

Follow us on Facebook or Twitter @GlobeBiblio. Amy Sutherland is the author, most recently, of "Rescuing Penny Jane." She can be reached at amysutherland@mac.com.

Women's rights: still a long way to go

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Hoping to spur such action, the Beijing conference had highlighted women's low representation. Yet today, as Clinton points out, only four countries in the world have gender parity in their legislative bodies.

Like many, she argues that augmenting women's power means increasing their representation in both the public and private sectors. In "Launching While Female: Smashing the System That Holds Women Entrepreneurs Back," Susanne Althoff focuses on women's efforts to establish their own businesses. Based on interviews with more than 100 women and non-binary entrepreneurs, "Launching While Female" combines keen analysis with tales from the front lines.

Studies show that women-led startups perform better than companies launched by men. Yet investors commonly subject women's projects to higher standards, awarding them less than 3 percent of all US venture capital.

Arlan Hamilton, a Black woman who has gained a following in tech circles, launched her own venture capital fund in 2015. She aimed it at startups led by women, people of color, and those who identify as LGBTQ, after being told once too often that such groups were bad bets. In three years, she raised and doled out more than \$4 million to 100 companies, showing on a small scale what was possible.

In Althoff's telling, the entrepreneurial world remains very much a boys' club. Women seeking the kind of support men enjoy are stymied by negative stereotypes and, often, sexual harassment. Not surprisingly, they cite a lack of confidence as one of the greatest hurdles to success. Yet for women, projecting too much self-assurance can alienate investors. To achieve influence, one study showed, they must (unlike men) also be perceived as caring.

One woman who has grown sick of this game is Jennifer Palmieri. The di-

rector of communications for Hillary Clinton's presidential campaign, Palmieri has followed up her best-selling book, "Dear Madam President," with a feminist manifesto. "She Proclaims: Our Declaration of Independence From a Man's World" calls on women to reject masculine definitions of success and to support each other's ambitions.

"No Stopping Us Now: The Adventures of Older Women in American History," by Gail Collins, offers a few centuries' worth of models. For years now, Collins has been serving up a wry indictment of the sexism pervading the American political system, through both her New York Times column and a growing number of books.

Beginning in the mid-1800s, she writes in her latest, women in their 50s and 60s led the first great push for equal rights. Since then, progress has often depended on breakthroughs by individuals such as Millicent Fenwick, a liberal Republican from New Jersey who was first elected to Congress at 64. Collins notes that when Fenwick took her seat, in 1975, she was one of just 19 women in the US House of Representatives. Those numbers have improved, yet today, women still make up less than a quarter of the lower chamber.

One frequently proposed answer, echoed by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, in "We Should All Be Feminists," is to raise our daughters, and sons, differently. (With Adichie's compact classic, and with thanks to indulgent editors, this column temporarily becomes 4½ Takes.)

Based on a TEDx talk delivered in 2012, "We Should All Be Feminists" is a rallying cry aimed foremost at African audiences. Adichie articulates familiar themes, but with such charm and clarity that her reach extends further, to the universal aspirations of Beijing. We should all read her.

M.J. Andersen is an author and journalist who writes frequently on the arts.



AFP FILE PHOTO

First lady Hillary Clinton after her speech in Beijing in 1995.

Music history, in a minor key

By Clea Simon

GLOBE CORRESPONDENT

David Hajdu knows music. As the biographer of Billy Strayhorn ("Lush Life") and chronicler of both pop ("Love for Sale") and folk music scenes ("Positively 4th Street"), he has an intimate and thorough knowledge of not only the artists but also the producers and promoters, critics and fans who populate the music world. It makes sense, therefore, that Hajdu would set his first work of fiction in this artistic milieu. But while much of his nonfiction necessarily centers on the stars, "Adrienne Geffel" focuses instead on the periphery. Although this novel is a purported oral history of the title character, a mysterious avant-garde musician, hers is the one voice we never hear. Instead, as we seemingly learn about this fictional pianist-composer we are treated to a revealing — and at times hilarious — satire of the music business, fame, and the cult of personality.

The setup is simple. After a brief introduction, which assumes we are already aware of the genius of the fictional Geffel, the unnamed narrator expounds on her societal impact. He places her, Zelig-like, with various cultural touchstones: Geffel is the subject of a Jill Sobule song, the unnamed author says, and has "inspired" a "semi-factual, semi-fictional" Sofia Coppola film. She is referenced in an off-color Cardi B lyric. He then presents interviews with family members, teachers, friends, lovers, critics, doctors, and business associates cut and compiled to create a portrait of the musician, who has apparently disappeared. As the interviews alternate, they sketch out the biography of a misunderstood artist. More to the point, they expose the blinding narcissism of nearly everyone drawn to her strange art, skewering the institutions that define and market taste.

Much of the humor in this short comic novel is broad. Geffel's mother, Carolyn, may have proudly framed one of her daughter's albums, for example, but she hasn't played it. "I'd have to take it off the wall and un-frame it, and get the record player out," she explains. A music critic,



NICOLAS - STOCK.ADOBE.COM

ADRIENNE GEFFEL

By David Hajdu
Norton, 224 pages, \$25.95

meanwhile, can't resist claiming credit for Geffel's genius. "[P]eople forgot the importance of my role in introducing her, until I reminded them," he says. Pompous scenesters baldly remake themselves to sound more interesting — a Brian becomes "Biran," "like Lord Byron ... Brian's just my legal name," he explains, while a grasping record executive spells his name "Harvé."

Inside jokes abound, particularly in the testimony of experts who can supposedly offer insight into Geffel or her exceedingly odd compositions, which apparently emanate directly from her emotions. Anybody who has interviewed musicians, for example, will recognize Hajdu's parody of a spacey saxophonist, who responds to a question about his collaboration with Geffel with oblique incoherence: "We created in the same time and space," he says. "We did not listen to one another in the historical sense." That same wit takes down academic language when a verbose musicologist unintentionally reveals his own cluelessness as he says, "The sheer volume of scholarship on Adrienne Geffel since recordings made her music available for close examination speaks at once to the emotional-intellectual capaciousness of the work and

to the inversely proportionate illuminative capacity of the musicologists engaged in unpacking it." Likewise, an early reference to an editor at Boston's now-defunct Real Paper will have local music journalists guessing at its inspiration.

Other jokes are a little more welcoming to a wider readership: When that music critic, who tries to take credit for Geffel's fame, quotes his own first review of her — "I have seen the future of the avant-garde, and her name is Adrienne Geffel" — it's an obvious reference to Jon Landau's similar lauding of Bruce Springsteen, for example.

At times the humor wears thin. The one-note recitals, particularly by the hypercerebral musicologist and self-important critic, become repetitive, even in this relatively short work. By the time Hajdu wields the critical doubletalk to tackle another issue — whether if great art can be created by someone who is happy — it is too little too late. A perennial debate among critics and fans of a certain sort, this question is left largely unresolved, though Hajdu does use it to hint at Geffel's fate. What we learn, instead, is how all of us view each other as extensions of ourselves, for our own dreams and purposes, and, ultimately, how mysterious art and the act of creation really are.

Clea Simon's most recent novel is "An Incantation of Cats." She can be reached at www.cleasimon.com.

On what it means to be a full citizen

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tertiary classes of citizenship. "Conditional Citizens" is an extended essay divided into seven sections: "Allegiance," "Faith," "Borders," "Assimilation," "Tribe," "Caste," and "Inheritance." Lalami initiates and sustains her case through memoir. Raised in Rabat, Morocco, Lalami moved to Los Angeles in the early 1990s to complete a doctorate in psycholinguistics at the University of Southern California. Subsequently, she married and, in 2000, became a US citizen. For 20 years now, as she's fashioned a literary career, Lalami has noted her creeping awareness of her conditional status:

"Being a citizen of the United States, I had thought, meant being an equal member of the American family," she writes. "As time went by, however, the contradictions between doctrine and reality were hard to ignore. While my life in this country is in most ways happy and fulfilling, it has never been entirely secure or comfortable. Certain facts regularly stand in the way, facts that make of me a conditional citizen. By this I mean that my relationship to the state . . . is affected in all sorts of ways by my being an immigrant, a woman, an Arab, and a Muslim."

Often immigrant citizens and citizens of color are asked to relinquish memories of their origins, their histories, in order to demonstrate their allegiance to the state and acceptance of the political status quo, which likely includes their marginalization, if not their dehumanization. "Nothing [is] more American than forgetting the past," writes Lalami. "It is through the obliteration of memory, an obliteration perpetrated with great deliberation by the state upon the citizenry, that American identity is fashioned. But conditional citizens will insist on remembering."

Lalami's "remembering" carries "the burden of having to educate white Americans about all the ways in which one is different from them." She writes of being publicly challenged for her multilingual abilities. Frequently, at book events, she must explain her Africaness, her Moroccan-Muslim lineage, and even Islamic terrorist organizations, rather than



APRIL ROCHA PHOTOGRAPHY

Laila Lalami's new book is called "Conditional Citizens: On Belonging in America."

fielding questions about literary art. On one hand, the burden allows Lalami to diminish stereotypes about Muslims. On the other hand, the burden forces her to explain geopolitical complexities: "it is impossible to tell the story of ISIS without reference to Arab dictators or American presidents," or, more significantly, ordinary citizens in the US, Iraq, or Syria.

Asserting that even ordinary Americans are implicated in international conflicts, Lalami argues, helps illustrate the artificiality of border walls and the racist fears coded therein. When the US federal government doesn't erect a wall at the border with Canada, but insists upon one at the Mexican border, the southern wall must be understood as "a racialized structure." Those who trumpet border walls yearn for simplicity in spaces where hybrid cultural identities and political complexities are the rule. Worse yet, border walls "do not simply keep others out; they also keep us in."

The "us"/"them" binary central to border talk is "the power dynamic that underlies demands for assimilation." But the demand that some white Americans make for assimilation into a monolingual, monocultural, "simplified" version of the national life is the expression of manifold anxieties, including an "awareness . . . that they will become a demographic minority in this country within a generation"; a fear of losing the advan-

tages "that other races simply don't have"; and a worry that collective recognition of systemic racism will require accountability, recompense. However, eradicating racism isn't about blaming or shaming white people, it's "about ensuring that everyone is treated equally, which is a basic duty of a democratic government toward its citizens."

As Lalami explains in "Inheritance," the system of conditionality she's been describing is founded on a patriarchal order that silences women and endangers them physically. This is the hub of conditional citizenship in the American context. When Lalami explains to some US-born friends that she has "not felt fully free or fully equal" in Morocco or the US, they claim that she ought to feel lucky because American gender arrangements are much better than those on the African continent. What Lalami wants, however, "is freedom, not better conditions of subjugation." Though Lalami's interrogation of patriarchy is the most important critique in this very strong book, strangely, "Inheritance" isn't as well-executed as the earlier parts.

The epilogue's title, "Do Not Despair the Country," comes from a line in Frederick Douglass's famous speech, "What to the Slave Is the Fourth of July?" Lalami's allusion provides powerful context for her definition of active, equal citizenship — it begins with the universal right to vote and no restrictions on suffrage "based on race, class, gender, region, or other markers of identity," and ends with "freedom of movement" for all citizens and protection of their right to live free of "harassment and discrimination, whether by the state or private entities, and, if those freedoms are breached, they can seek redress through state institutions." For citizens planning to exercise the franchise this fall, "Conditional Citizens" clarifies the stakes of the most crucial American election season of the 21st century thus far.

An essayist and critic, Walton Muzumba is also the author of "The Shadow and the Act: Black Intellectual Practice, Jazz Improvisation, and Philosophical Pragmatism."

The Fine Print

STORY BEHIND THE BOOK | KATE TUTTLE

JFK: Coming of Age in the American Century' dives deep on the 35th president

Historian Fredrik Logevall had written about John F. Kennedy before, in his Pulitzer-winning “Embers of War,” about the Vietnam era. But it wasn’t until he undertook a two-volume biography of the former president that he really explored the man and his life. The first volume, “JFK: Coming of Age in the American Century, 1917-1956,” was published this month.

Kennedy’s life spanned an era in which the United States grew into a superpower, Logevall added. “I feel like I can tell these twin narratives, I can tell the story of Kennedy’s rise, and then map it onto the story of America’s rise.” As a professor of international affairs and history at Harvard, he added, it was the first time he had to plumb a subject’s psychology. “I had to go into the psychological dimensions much more; I try to be careful, because I’m not trained as a psychologist. But I hope we get pretty close to a fellow who’s often seen as kind of elusive.”



DAVID WILSON FOR THE BOSTON GLOBE

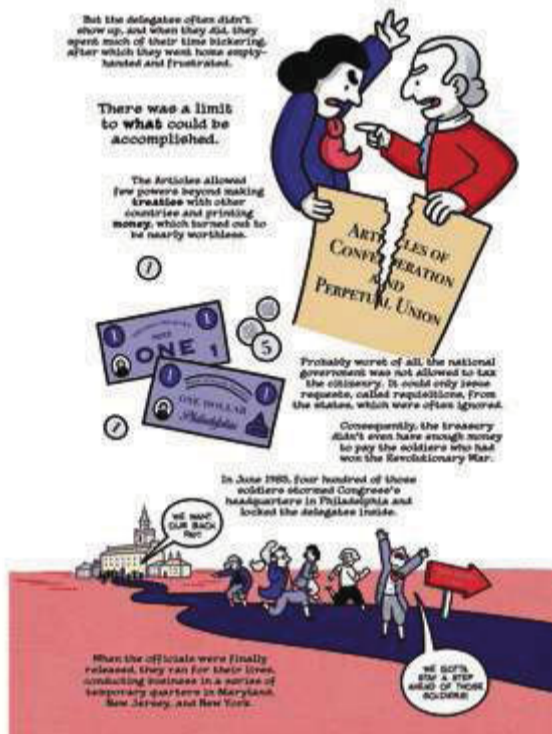
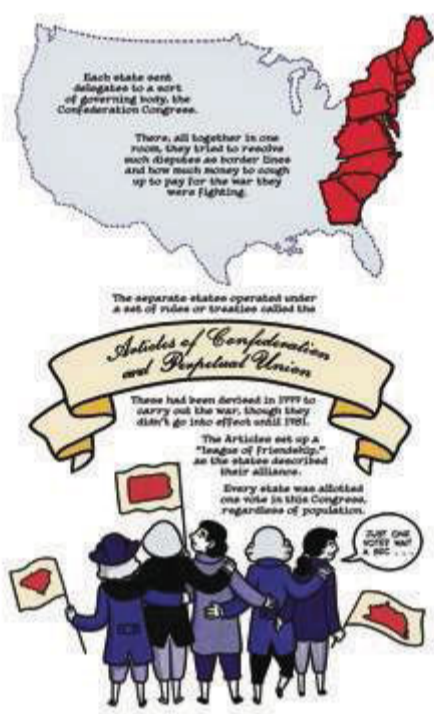
Logevall drew on the vast resources of the JFK Presidential Library, including some newly available letters, as well as other materials, such as those held in the archives at Choate, JFK’s prep school alma mater. Understanding Kennedy’s family and childhood were important, Logevall said. For one thing, JFK’s long history of illness was a key to the man he became. “It mattered a lot, no question,” Logevall said. “I think that one of the things it did was it made him a voracious reader. There wasn’t a lot that kids could do in those days if they were in bed, other than to read. I also think it instilled in JFK a certain empathy. I think it made it easier for him to put himself into somebody else’s shoes.”

So what does JFK have to teach us now, in a time of great political uncertainty? “He believed in politics and he believed in government,” Logevall said. “He believed in expertise; he believed in the vital importance of reasoning from evidence. I think those are important messages for today.”

Logevall reads at 7 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 26, in a virtual event hosted by Brookline BooksSmith. www.brooklinebooksmith.com

Kate Tuttle, a freelance writer and critic, can be reached at kate.tuttle@gmail.com.

NEW ENGLAND LITERARY NEWS | NINA MACLAUGHLIN



Graphic history

Cynthia Levinson and husband Sanford Levinson’s “Fault Lines in the Constitution: The Framers, Their Fights, and the Flaws That Affect Us Today” (World Citizen Comics) came out originally in 2017 as prose nonfiction, and has now taken timely new form as a graphic novel with art by Ally Shwed. The book — succinct, powerful, playful, provocative — tracks the evolution of the Constitution and how the framers, “behind barred doors and latched windows . . . concocted an entirely new and daring kind of government, faults and all.” The authors, who split their time between Boston and Austin, Texas, deftly show the ways in which the early days of nation-making play out today, covering voting rights, the Patriot Act, the Electoral College, emergency powers, constitutional amendments, pardons, and presidential term limits. Not only is it a thorough and concise history, giving context to how things have unfolded over the last several decades, it also offers insight as to what possible alternatives could look like, fixes to the inevitable cracks that come with age, and is a useful primer or refresher as we hurdle toward November.

“Fault Lines in the Constitution,” the graphic novel by Cynthia Levinson and Sanford Levinson, illustrated by Ally Shwed, published by First Second, an imprint of Macmillan, 2020.

Verse of time and place

Dan Chiasson’s earthy and cerebral new collection of poems confronts the order of things. In “The Math Campers” (Knopf), out this week, Chiasson, poet, critic, professor at Wellesley College, writes of the settle and lurch of traffic, and throughout the book, there is a sense of acceleration and the subtle thump of stop-again, the halt-and-falter of forward movement through time, as experienced in particular as a father seeing himself in his sons. Structurally, lyrically, the collection shifts and moves, incantatory, in dialogue, in correspondence, in repetition. “Now the way becomes time, / and we are still drifting / fresh from a slaughter.” He writes of youth and pals, parties in Vermont cattle fields, of stars and meadows and fetish sites (“Stay prepubescent!”), snowdrops, scorpions, enormity, with a then-now mindframe that holds the whole great span at once. These are intimate poems, oneiric and inviting. He moves between the lofty and the cosmic — “the reason reason gave the river wonder left behind,” and tennis matches as a teen. In doing, Chiasson launches us back and forth across the net of time.

Evening of leaders

Mass Poetry’s annual fund-raiser, Evening of Inspired Leaders, was canceled back in March because of the pandemic, and they’re holding a virtual version of it this year, where a number of notables from the community will share a poem that has sustained or inspired them during this strange stretch of time. The lineup includes singer and author Rosanne Cash; WBUR’s Meghna Chakrabarti; poets Regie Gibson and Anthony Febo; Anne Klubanski, CEO of Partners HealthCare; Boston City Councilor Julia Mejia; Community Servings CEO David Waters; nurse practitioner Michelle Quirk; Vikiana Petit-Homme, organizer for March for Our Lives; and student speaker Sharon Castang. The event is free, and funds raised will go toward Mass Poetry’s work bringing poetry and poetry programming to people across the state. The event takes place this Thursday, Sept. 24, from 7-8 p.m. To register, visit masspoetry.org

Coming out

- “Every Day We Get More Illegal: Poems” by Juan Felipe Herrera (City Lights)
- “Climate Crisis and the Global Green Deal” by Noam Chomsky and Robert Pollin (Verso)
- “For Now” by Eileen Myles (Yale)

Pick of the week

Susan Schlesinger at Books on the Square in Providence recommends “The Vanished Birds” by Simon Jimenez (Del Rey): “This is a complex tale of loves lost, families found, and the choices, risks, and sacrifices we make for them. The story opens when a young boy falls from the sky and the tribal community feels that this is a bad omen. Beautiful imagery and complex characters emerge in this cacophony of distant planets, corporate greed, and technology run amok.”

Nina MacLaughlin is the author of “Wake, Siren.” She can be reached at nmaclaughlin@gmail.com.

LOCAL BESTSELLERS

HARDCOVER

FICTION

- All the Devils Are Here Louise Penny MINOTAUR
- The Lying Life of Adults Elena Ferrante EUROPA
- Anxious People Fredrik Backman ATRIA
- Transcendent Kingdom Yaa Gyasi KNOPF
- Squeeze Me Carl Hiaasen KNOPF
- The Vanishing Half Brit Bennett RIVERHEAD BOOKS
- One by One Ruth Ware GALLERY/SCOUT PRESS
- Monogamy Sue Miller HARPER
- Hamnet Maggie O’Farrell KNOPF
- The Guest List Lucy Foley MORROW

NONFICTION

- Disloyal: A Memoir Michael Cohen SKYHORSE
- Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents Isabel Wilkerson RANDOM HOUSE
- How to Be an Antiracist Ibram X. Kendi ONE WORLD
- Too Much and Never Enough: How My Family Created the World’s Most Dangerous Man Mary L. Trump S&S
- His Truth Is Marching On: John Lewis and the Power of Hope Jon Meacham RANDOM HOUSE
- Vesper Flights Helen Macdonald GROVE PRESS
- The Dynasty Jeff Benedict AVID READER PRESS
- Compromised: Counterintelligence and the Threat of Donald J. Trump Peter Strzok HOUGHTON MIFFLIN HARCOURT
- Eat a Peach: A Memoir David Chang CLARKSON POTTER
- The Splendid and the Vile: A Saga of Churchill, Family, and Defiance During the Blitz Erik Larson CROWN

PAPERBACK

FICTION

- Circe Madeline Miller BACK BAY
- Homegoing Yaa Gyasi VINTAGE
- Normal People Sally Rooney HOGARTH
- The Overstory Richard Powers NORTON
- The Nickel Boys Colson Whitehead ANCHOR
- The Testaments Margaret Atwood ANCHOR
- Little Fires Everywhere Celeste Ng PENGUIN
- This Tender Land William Kent Krueger ATRIA
- A Gentleman in Moscow Amor Towles PENGUIN
- Drive Your Plow Over the Bones of the Dead Olga Tokarczuk RIVERHEAD

NONFICTION

- White Fragility Robin DiAngelo BEACON PRESS
- Born a Crime Trevor Noah ONE WORLD
- The Warmth of Other Suns Isabel Wilkerson VINTAGE
- Stamped From the Beginning Ibram X. Kendi BOLD TYPE
- Just Mercy Bryan Stevenson ONE WORLD
- Intimations: Six Essays Zadie Smith PENGUIN
- The Old Farmer’s Almanac 2021 OLD FARMER’S ALMANAC
- So You Want to Talk About Race Ijeoma Oluo SEAL PRESS
- The Truths We Hold Kamala Harris PENGUIN
- Braiding Sweetgrass Robin Wall Kimmerer MILKWEED EDITIONS

BOOKINGS

All author readings and appearances are virtual.

MONDAY

Jennifer De Leon (“Don’t Ask Me Where I’m From”) in conversation with **Sujeidy Palmer** at 6 p.m. at Brookline BooksSmith ... **Stephen Puleo** (“Voyage of Mercy”) reads at 6:30 p.m. at the Swampscott Public Library ... **Sharon Salzberg** (Real Change: Mindfulness to Heal Ourselves and the World”) reads at 7 p.m. at Harvard Book Store.

TUESDAY

Keila Dawson, Lindsay Metcalf, and Jeanette Bradley (“No Voice Too Small”) read at 6:30 p.m. at An Unlikely Story ... **Arvin Ahmadi** (“How It All Blew Up”) in conversation with **Adam Silvera** and **Becky Albertalli** at 7 p.m. at Porter Square Books ... **Claudia Rankine** (“Just Us: An American Conversation”) reads at 7 p.m. at Harvard Book Store (free, donation, or \$35.25 ticket includes book and signed bookplate).

WEDNESDAY

Josh Funk (“Lady Pancake and Sir French Toast: Short and Sweet!”) reads at 3 p.m. at Brookline BooksSmith ... **Becca Pizzi** (“Feat on Feat”) in conversation with **Joanna Tzouvelis** at 6:30 p.m. at Belmont Books ... **Jill Filipovic** (“OK Boomer, Let’s Talk: How My Generation Got Left Behind”) reads at 7 p.m. at Harvard Book Store ... **Allie Brosh** (“Solutions and Other Problems”) in conversation with **Marc Maron** at 8 p.m. presented by Brookline BooksSmith

THURSDAY

Cathleen Barnhart (“That’s What Friends Do”), **Lorien Lawrence** (“The Stitchers”), **Cat Scully** (“Jennifer Strange”), **Kayla Noel** (“Coo”), and **Josh Roberts** (“The Witches of Willow Cove”) read at 7 p.m. at Porter Square Books ... **Sheila Williams, James Patrick Kelly, and Suzanne Palmer** (“Entanglements: Tomorrow’s Lovers, Families, and Friends”) read at 7 p.m. at Belmont Books ... **Ayad Akhtar** (“Homeland Elegies”) in conversation with **Joshua Ferris** at 7 p.m. at Harvard Book Store

FRIDAY

Helen Macdonald (“Vesper Flights”) in conversation with **Kathryn Schulz** at 7 p.m. at Porter Square Books

SATURDAY

Sarah S. Brannen (“A Perfect Day”) reads at 11 a.m. at Belmont Books ... **Fredrik Logevall** (“JFK: Coming of Age in the American Century, 1917-1956”) in conversation with Seth Blumenthal at 7 p.m. at Brookline BooksSmith

Send listings to books@globe.com. All events are subject to change.

WHAT YOU’RE READING

Time at the ‘Shore’

I took Barbara Delinsky’s “A Week at the Shore” with me during a recent sojourn on Block Island, and found myself spending more time with the book than at the shore. Delinsky’s latest opus is not only riveting in every detail, but spellbinding as well. It has such powerfully descriptive writing, and her characters are both mesmerizing and familial. Succinctly, some books are worth not going to sleep for, and this is truly one of them.

— MEL YOKEN, *New Bedford*

Tell us what you are reading these days at books@globe.com.